

Frequently Asked Questions About the Fall 2011 Grades 3-9 MEAP Assessment Results

1) Since the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) assessments are taken in the fall, at the beginning of the school year, what content is tested?

Mathematics and reading assessments are administered each year in grades 3 through 8. These tests cover content taught during the previous school year. Writing assessments are administered in grades 4 and 7; science in grades 5 and 8; and social studies assessments in grades 6 and 9. The writing, science, and social studies assessments cover content from the previous two to three grade levels.

2) Why are the MEAP assessments given in fall instead of winter or spring?

There are pros and cons to testing in each of these time frames throughout the school year. Several years ago, Michigan decided to move to fall testing for grades 3 through 9, and since that time, MEAP testing has occurred in October of each year. Fall testing allows the assessment of the full previous year of instruction and measures student learning that was retained over the summer break.

3) Can MEAP Fall 2011 scores be compared to scores from previous years for the same grade and subject?

This past year, the state adopted more rigorous “cut scores” for the MEAP that represented career- and college-ready achievement standards. The new cut scores have been applied operationally for the first time to these fall 2011 MEAP test results. Additionally, the MEAP results from 2008, 2009, and 2010 have been re-posted with the career- and college-ready cut scores applied retroactively to facilitate meaningful comparisons of MEAP scores across these years. The MEAP writing test was significantly modified in 2010; therefore, comparisons of writing data between 2010 and 2011 are meaningful comparisons, but comparison of the 2010 and 2011 MEAP writing data to years prior to 2010 are not.

For more information, please visit the Career- and College-Ready Cut Scores FAQ at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/New_Cut_Scores_FAQ_365040_7.pdf.

4) What is the Performance Level Change information that is reported?

To help schools understand changes in student performance levels, MEAP reports and downloadable data files include a set of “transition tables” that track the changes in student performance from year-to-year in reading and mathematics. There are four performance levels, and most have been further divided into subcategories that more accurately define where a student’s performance falls *within* one of the four performance levels. These subcategories allow the detection of subtle performance level changes that do not necessarily result in a full performance level increase or decrease. Each student’s change in performance from the prior year is designated as one of the following: Significant Decline (SD), Decline (D), Maintaining (M), Improvement (I), or Significant Improvement (SI).

For more information, please see Question 12 of the Career- and College-Ready Cut Scores FAQ at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/New_Cut_Scores_FAQ_365040_7.pdf.

5) Will the fall 2011 scores be attributed to the school attended this year (2011-2012) or to the school attended last year (2010-2011)?

Because the fall assessments are based on content taught during the previous year, student performance for the determination of adequate yearly progress (AYP) and school accreditation is attributed to the school where instruction occurred the previous school year, provided the student was with the prior school for a full academic year.

6) Do these scores reflect the Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs) in all content areas?

Yes. The MEAP assessments are built specifically to measure Michigan's current content standards (the GLCEs).

7) How can students with disabilities be held to the same standards as other students?

All students with disabilities have Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams that determine which assessment is appropriate for an individual student in each content area. If the IEP Team determined the MEAP was the appropriate assessment for the student in one or more content areas, then the student was indeed held to the same standards as other students. The IEP Team also determines if any accommodation(s) is appropriate for the student during testing (e.g., an Enlarged Print or Audio CD version). However, if the IEP Team determined that an alternate assessment was appropriate for the student in one or more content areas, the student may have taken MEAP-Access (Michigan's alternate assessment based on modified achievement standards), or MI-Access (Michigan's alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards).

More information on MI-Access can be found at: www.michigan.gov/mi-access. Fall 2011 MI-Access results are available now.

More information on MEAP-Access can be found at: www.michigan.gov/meap-access. Fall 2011 MEAP-Access results are not yet available, but we estimate they will be available in early March 2012.